

Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi, Valley Business and Energy Experts Demonstrate that Valley Can Go Green

At World Ag Expo, Leaders Examine Clean Energy and Business Practices which can also Grow Jobs

TULARE, CA -- Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi today touted successful efforts by valley leaders and businesses to grow “green” jobs while helping to slow global warming. At a roundtable held in conjunction with the World Ag Expo, Garamendi said the Central Valley -- with some of the state's most polluted air and water -- has much to gain by leading the state's efforts to go green.

“We must look toward alternative sources of energy as we build our economy and grow jobs for the future. With the use of clean burning fuel and state of the art energy efficiency measures, the Central Valley must play a key role in making this happen,” said Lt. Governor Garamendi.

At today's roundtable meeting, Lt. Governor Garamendi, who chairs the State's bipartisan Commission on Economic Development, heard from Valley energy experts and business leaders who demonstrated the need for, and the good business sense in, converting to green businesses and technologies. Presentations at today's roundtable included:

- Jeff Wright, Dean of UC Merced's School of Engineering and a clean energy expert, discussed the challenges facing California in light of the world's energy consumption needs and California's need to be a green leader. He also discussed the challenge facing California and the nation in retooling the energy workforce, not only the replacement of this very skilled cohort, but as we shift to a sustainable energy future.

- Professor Brian Jenkins, Co-Director, California Biomass Collaborative at UC Davis discussed efforts to bring sustainable bio-fuels to market as an alternative, clean energy source, and the need for Central Valley enterprises to consider alternatives in light of AB32, California's Global Warming Solutions Act.

- George Waidelich, Vice President of Energy Operations for Safeway Inc., will discuss how one successful valley business is already putting green energy alternatives into practice. Safeway's recently announced the conversion of its Tracy, California – based fleet to biofuel.

“As with so many important societal issues, California is stepping forward to set the bar with

respect to energy efficiency, and technical innovation that will change our energy future and that of the nation.” said Professor Jeff Wright, Dean of the School of Engineering at UC Merced. “Discussions such as these play a vital role in engaging stakeholders throughout the state, and building strong support for essential research and policy-making that will meet these challenges.”

Lt. Governor Garamendi has revitalized the California Commission for Economic Development, transforming this important body into a powerhouse for generating ideas that revitalize and enhance our economy, and to create opportunities for future growth, research, development and new markets. The Commission is exploring policies that will lead to a sustainable growth economy for California, and is supporting the development of a rational energy policy that attacks the causes and effects of global warming.